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The Publisher, Staff & Editors

1987-1997

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>From the Editor's Desk...

Why? Why is it we find the DOJ, Reno, Klein and & Co., so hell bent for leather?? This cannot be a simple case of "notoriety reaching." It must be deeper than this. Somehow or other I cannot get it out of my mind that the "fix" is in. On no, not that type of fix. Its a real fancy political fix instead. You see, what do the great and wonderful politicians of this Congress and Administration have to boast of? Not a doggoned thing... other than Paula Jones, Ruby Ridge, Waco and the promised "short term" involvement in Bosnia. Has either Congress or Clinton's crew really done anything to directly benefit John Q. Taxpayer?? I don't think so. So, what have we staring us in the face besides the US Government butting

in where they have no expertise, no real knowledge and for certain no right to be. Telling Microsoft how to run its business. What a joke!!

The "almighty DOJ, once before, decided to interfere with "big business" remember the "big breakup" of AT&T?? Think its STILL broken up? You really do think it's still broken up the way the DOJ so self righteously declared? "How AT&T must be broken up to protect the communications consumer." Joke... Joke and more Joke. AT&T is more powerful and profitable today than ever. Not to mention it is in the process of rebuilding its multi billion dollar empire within the BS guidelines of the foolish edicts of the anti-trust group at Justice that were recommended to the deciding judge. Today, AT&T simply has diversified its holdings but still has all sorts of patents, all sorts of inroads into telecommunications and is busily buying up the "Baby Bells" it was divested of a decade ago.

One can see the very same type of garbage coming from this latest witch hunt the DOJ is putting on. They've hired a super high priced, \$550.00 per hour, NY Lawyer to "help" them wage the anti-trust suit planned against Microsoft. This has got to be the biggest screwing ever set-up for the US citizen and taxpayer to forcefully endure. First, we must pay this slick lawyer while he tries to hammer Microsoft and then... if this mouthpiece is successful we'll be forced to re-do all our software and operating systems with the morphed trash the DOJ geeks come up with while they are rolling in bed with the likes of Ellison, Barksdale and the rest of the cry babies that found themselves unable to compete with MS.

One can only wonder how Ellison and his Oracle bunch would've behaved had they been in MS's shoes. After all, isn't it Ellison who wants to do away with "owning programs" and "allowing" (forcing) users, corporate and/or private, to lease program use time over the 'net?? Sure!! And I might point out this plays right into the hands of the RABID Government Control Freaks who really wish to control your every move from womb to tomb. Barksdale is very busy trying to pull the same stunts with Netscape that he and the others are crying foul over with MS and Internet Explorer. Buy-offs, rebates and special accommodations go to those isp's, software houses and publishers who bundle Netscape with their products. But since its not Microsoft and is one of the cry babies... its ok with Reno & Co..

Does anyone out there remember the \$1200.00 "hammer" or, better yet is anyone really comfortable with Reno's "I see no reason for a special prosecutor over the handling of campaign donations" or the outrageously unbelievable "I smoked it but didn't inhale" baloney? It stands to reason that the very same skepticism must be applied to the so-called justifications being proffered for persecuting Microsoft. Somebody ought to track the dollar. What dollar you say?? How about the mega bucks invested in Netscape, Oracle etc., stock and bonds. Somebody ought to track down every Stock and Bond certificate sold. Then, make public those holders of said stocks and bonds who are active members of this Congress. Including past members of Congress and/or the relatives of said past or present members of either Congress or anyone in the Executive Branch either in a position of power or close to it.

If Reno & Co., were to use the millions they plan to blow chasing Microsoft to build homes for the homeless, provide care to our veterans and step medical research for cures of the most deadly affliction facing mankind since the Bubonic Plague AIDS... they be doing this country and the world a far greater service.

Sorry for the soapbox treatment folks... but I cannot help but see our

Federal Bureaucracy become more and more ridiculous with every passing month.

I pray that each and every one of you enjoy a warm, healthy and festive Holiday Season with your loved ones.

Of Special Note:

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LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

## Weekly Happenings in the Computer World

Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

### Judge Rules Against Microsoft

Microsoft Corp. has been ordered by a federal judge to stop -- at least temporarily -- requiring computer makers to license and distribute its Internet Explorer web browser as a condition for licensing the Windows 95 operating system. However, U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson also rejected a civil contempt suit brought by the U.S. Justice Department seeking to slap a million-dollar-a-day fine on Microsoft. United Press International quotes the judge's 25-page ruling as ordering Microsoft to "cease and desist" from linking access to Windows 95 to an "express or implied" condition to install any Microsoft web browser. Microsoft is free to market Internet Explorer, the judge said, but must give computer manufacturers a choice.

The case isn't over, though. Judge Jackson also appointed Harvard Law School professor Lawrence Lessig as a special judicial officer to study the facts of the case and relevant legal precedents. Lessig, noted expert in technology law, is to rule May 31 on the legal issues raised in the case. UPI says a statement from Joel Klein, assistant attorney general of the Justice Department antitrust division, quoted the judge as saying:

"The probability that Microsoft will not only continue to reinforce its operating system monopoly by its licensing practices, but might also require yet another monopoly in the Internet browser market, is simply too great to tolerate indefinitely. No consumer should be denied the browser of their choice because Microsoft made their computer vendor an offer they couldn't refuse."

As reported earlier, the Justice Department suit, filed in October, accused Microsoft of violating a 1995 court order against "anti-competitive licensing terms." Attorney General Janet Reno said at the time the government's purpose was "to prevent Microsoft from protecting and expanding its Windows PC operating system monopoly by anti-competitive means."

As expected, reactions vary:

- ' • UPI quotes some industry analysts as calling Jackson's decision a victory for Netscape, Microsoft's closest competitor in Internet browsing software.
- ' • Associated Press writer Rob Wells comments, "A clear concern for Microsoft now is the impact of Jackson's order on its planned release of Windows 98 ... due out next spring (and) to fully integrate the Internet browser with the operating system."
- ' • Microsoft spokesman Greg Shaw acknowledged the effect of the ruling "is a little unclear," adding, "We hope the matter will be resolved before then." He also said the company was pleased the judge did not hold it in contempt. "This is clearly a preliminary decision," he said, "and the court agrees with our position that more facts are needed. We remain confident that what we are doing is good for the software industry and good for consumers."
- ' • Reno is claiming victory, telling AP, "It will help ensure a competitive market and prevent Microsoft from using its dominance to gain an unfair advantage in the browser market."

Wells quotes Jackson's ruling as saying that forcing Microsoft not to

bundle IE with Windows 95 "will not cause a significant hardship" for the company since it already sells the product separately.

Wrote the judge, "Microsoft will remain free to market and promote (Internet Explorer) just as it presently does -- or in any other manner it sees fit -- so long as (computer manufacturers) are given the choice of whether or not to accept the product." Wells says the judge ruled that part of the 1995 court order "does reach Microsoft's controversial licensing practices in some respect." But, acknowledging the complexity of the case, he said the ultimate question of whether Microsoft was violating the agreement "remains to be decided."

Said Jackson, "Without the benefit of further evidence in the record, an attempt to answer that question would be premature." AP found no consistent ruling of judge's decision among analysts. For instance, Jim Balderston, analyst at Zona Research in Redwood City, California, told Wells, "The judge did not throw Justice's case out the door. Nor did he rule with Justice and say, 'Microsoft, you're bad.' He just said 'Stop, and I'm going to review it further.'"

#### Microsoft Not Hurt by Ruling

Despite a federal judge's preliminary injunction against it, Microsoft Corp. is unlikely, analysts say, to delay any products or to lose much short-term profit. And a compromise appears to be in the works. As reported earlier, U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson last week ordered Microsoft to stop -- at least temporarily -- requiring computer makers to license and distribute its Internet Explorer web browser as a condition for licensing the Windows 95 operating system.

But, writing in The Wall Street Journal, reporter Don Clark quotes a Justice official as saying the agency would be satisfied if Microsoft offers a simple and economical way for PC makers to delete Internet Explorer, even if the product is shipped together with the current Windows 95 or with Windows 98. He added he expects the two sides to meet in the next few days to agree on an approach to satisfy the order. "Such a move," says Clark, "would give PC makers a choice between Microsoft's product and Netscape Communications Corp.'s browser, which is rapidly losing market share."

However, the Journal says most major computer makers -- Compaq Computer Corp., Hewlett-Packard Co., Dell Computer Corp. and Packard Bell NEC -- say they plan to keep using Internet Explorer along with Microsoft's operating systems. They note the Microsoft browser is free, while Netscape charges them an estimated \$1 to \$10 a copy for its browser. Over the weekend, a Microsoft spokesman told the paper the company still is studying whether to appeal the ruling, but believes the preliminary ruling shouldn't cause it to delay the shipment next spring of Windows 98 in any case.

#### Microsoft Appealing Ruling

Microsoft Corp. is set to appeal last week's court ruling barring it from compelling computer makers to use the Microsoft Internet Explorer web browser software along with its operating systems. Writing in The Wall Street Journal this morning, reporters Don Clark and John R. Wilke quote Microsoft officials as saying the company will comply with the preliminary injunction while the appeal is pending. However, they add, "its plans for giving personal computer makers a way to separate the two software products drew immediate fire from the Justice Department." The Redmond, Washington, software giant said it will give PC makers that don't want to

use its World Wide Web browser software a choice of simply deleting the browser files from its Windows 95 software -- an act that Microsoft contends makes the operating system fail to work properly -- or using a 1995 version of the operating system.

But, the Journal reports, "A Justice Department official said giving PC makers what amounts to a choice of an old or broken operating system isn't satisfactory." The unidentified official added, "The policy that Microsoft has announced does not comply with the judge's order," and that the agency is considering whether to go back to court to force Microsoft to comply. As reported earlier, U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson ordered Microsoft to stop -- at least temporarily -- requiring computer makers to license and distribute its Internet Explorer web browser as a condition for licensing the Windows 95 operating system. Clark and Wilke report Jackson's ruling "is expected to have little short-term impact but pose a long-term threat to the company's ability to use its dominance of operating-system software as a wedge into new markets."

#### Microsoft Alleged to be in Contempt

The U.S. Justice Department says Microsoft Corp. is making a "naked attempt" to defeat the purpose of a court order regarding separation of its Internet software and operating systems and has asked a federal judge to hold the company in contempt. Writing in The Wall Street Journal this morning, reporter Don Clark observes "escalating tensions between the government and the software giant," adding Justice Department attorneys argue Microsoft's response to the court order effectively asks personal-computer makers to settle for old or broken software if they want to use Microsoft operating systems without its World Wide Web browser software.

The federal agency has filed a motion asking U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson not only hold Microsoft in civil contempt, but fine the company \$1 million for each day Microsoft violates his order. Joel Klein, assistant attorney general for antitrust, told the paper, "Microsoft has gone from tying its products to tying the hands of its vendors. The more Microsoft continues its practices, the more consumers are harmed."

On the other side of the aisle, Microsoft Vice President Brad Chase says his employer is in complete compliance with the order and what Justice had originally sought, adding, "What the Justice Department asked for then and what they said today are as different as night and day." Meanwhile, antitrust lawyers tell Clark that while they aren't sure Justice will be able to win a contempt citation, they question whether Microsoft's aggressive stance will win points with the judge or the public.

Said J. Thomas Rosch, a San Francisco antitrust attorney who has followed the case, "If one is in violation of the spirit of an order while complying with the letter, that can indeed come back to haunt you." Jackson's preliminary injunction ordered Microsoft to cease and desist from requiring computer makers to use its World Wide Web browser software as a condition of licensing its operating systems. That ruling came after the Justice Department sued, alleging Microsoft violated a 1995 consent decree. As reported earlier, the Redmond, Washington, software publisher says it will appeal, arguing the judge overstepped his authority.

#### States Eye Microsoft Challenge

As the U.S. Justice Department turns up the heat against Microsoft Corp.,

state officials are considering a united national antitrust battle against the software giant. "I think action by the states is close to a certainty," Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal told reporter Gail Appleson of the Reuter News Service, adding he expects the state attorneys general will decide by early next year whether to take action against Microsoft. Fresh from winning an unprecedented settlement with the tobacco industry, the state attorneys general have been eying a Microsoft contest for some time, but Blumenthal told the wire service the state officers have not yet determined whether they will file separate actions or seek to intervene in the Justice Department lawsuit.

Reuters says they were holding conference calls and possibly will hold a meeting soon to determine how they might go forward. Meanwhile, on another front, the California attorney general's office says it is investigating Microsoft. "I can confirm that we are investigating Microsoft," said Staci Turner, spokeswoman for state Attorney General Dan Lungren. "Since it is an open investigation, there are no details that I can provide on the investigation."

Earlier, Texas sued Microsoft, alleging the state's antitrust probe was being impeded by Microsoft's licensing agreement, which requires client companies to notify the company before talking to government investigators. Back on the national level, while it is not unusual for the attorneys general to work together in bringing civil consumer fraud actions, "their unified power has gained new respect since the tobacco deal was reached on June 20," Appleson said. "Even though the \$368.5 billion settlement could be changed by Congress, the attorneys general won concessions from the powerful tobacco industry, which had boasted it never spent a cent on personal injury damages and would never settle a lawsuit."

Now some of the same attorneys general who were involved in the tobacco talks, including Blumenthal and those from Florida and New York, also are involved in the Microsoft discussions. Reuters says representatives from nine states met last week in Chicago for three days to discuss a possible strategy for suing Microsoft. Other states involved in the talks are California, Texas, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Massachusetts.

#### Apple May Not Make CEO Deadline

Analysts say it appears Apple Computer won't meet its self-imposed deadline to name a new chief executive officer by year's end. "Part of the problem," says The Associated Press, "is finding a top-flight candidate willing to tackle the tough turnaround job as long as acting CEO Steve Jobs remains on Apple's board." As noted, Apple has been searching for a new CEO since Gil Amelio was forced out in July. Jobs has been interim CEO since September. "But," says AP, "the odds are dwindling that Apple will be able to announce a new CEO and anew strategy at Macworld Expo, which begins in San Francisco on Jan. 6."

The San Jose Mercury News quotes a spokeswoman at Apple's Cupertino, California, headquarters as saying, "The Apple board has always said it expects to name a CEO by the end of the year, but expectations change." "As recently as two weeks ago, Apple board members said they had focused on a single serious candidate, whom they did not name," AP reports. "The Mercury News reported that Ed Zander, a veteran Sun Microsystems executive, was offered the top Apple job but turned it down because Jobs would not agree to leave the board." Zander declined to comment, but a source told the Mercury News he "didn't want Steve looking over his shoulder, second-guessing him on every decision."



## FTC Finds Net Gathers Kids' Data

In a "snapshot survey" of 126 Web sites, the Federal Trade Commission has found many Internet sites collect personal information from children without asking parents or allowing parents to control how the information is used. The FTC adds it also found 86 percent of the surveyed sites were collecting names, e-mail and postal addresses and telephone numbers.

Writing for The Associated Press, reporter John D. McClain says the commission also reported:

- ' • Fewer than 30 percent of the sites collecting the data posted either a privacy policy or a confidentiality statement.
- ' • Only 4 percent required parental authorization before collecting the information.

The FTC survey was conducted on Oct. 14, "Kids Privacy Surf Day," using sites listed by a popular directory of child-oriented Internet locations known as "Yahooligans!" McClain notes the FTC has not issued regulations on advertising for children over the Internet and other online services, but has released an "opinion letter" stating the agency's jurisdiction over deceptive market practices extends to the international computer network.

Director Jodie Bernstein of the FTC Bureau of Consumer Protection told the wire service, "Any company that engages in deceptive or unfair practices involving children violates the FTC Act. The FTC can bring legal action to halt such violations and seek an order imposing restrictions on future practices to ensure compliance with the FTC Act."

Bernstein said the FTC has not determined that the online information collection practices of any of the sites violated federal law, but added the sites in question will be sent e-mail messages notifying them that the FTC considers it deceptive to collect personal information from a child when the information will be used for another purpose. The FTC will tell the sites parental consent must be obtained before it is released to a third party.

Noting the Internet industry has proposed self-regulatory guidelines to govern the collection and use of children's information, Bernstein commented, "This survey 'snapshot' demonstrates that these guidelines need to be more broadly implemented." The FTC says it plans a systematic review of Internet information-collection practices in March for a report to Congress on the extent to which Internet sites, including children's sites, are posting privacy policies.

## Yahoo Reveals E-Mail Scam

A scam reportedly seeking to bilk Internet users out of their credit card numbers has been uncovered by Yahoo Inc. Johanna Bennett of the Dow Jones news service reports the company learned last week that someone pretending to be a Yahoo employee sent letters via a Yahoo free e-mail account telling people they had won a modem. Yahoo spokeswoman Katie Burke told the wire service the only hitch was that each recipient was to have to provide their name, phone number, address and credit-card number to cover shipping costs.

Bennett says Burke declined to reveal how many people submitted credit-card information, but said about 100 people responded to the Dec. 11 missive, either providing copies of their credit-card numbers or asking for more information about the contest. Dow Jones notes, "Yahoo started offering free e-mail accounts in October with the tag line yahoo.com. The e-mail

address under investigation was issued about two weeks ago, Burke said. Yahoo officials said that as far as their investigation can determine, none of the credit-card numbers have been used fraudulently. "

Burke added, "It is obviously very important to us to keep this kind of abuse to a minimum ... or better eliminate it completely." The wire service says letters were sent to anyone responding to the scam, warning them that the contests was a fraud and advising them to contact their credit-card companies immediately.

#### Privacy Guidelines Adopted

Guidelines to help keep sensitive personal information such as Social Security numbers and a mother's maiden name out of publicly accessed databases have been adopted voluntarily by the computer data industry, the Federal Trade Commission says. In a report to Congress, the FTC says the agreement was signed by a group of leading information companies that make up 90 percent of the database industry, including Lexis-Nexis and the nation's three main credit reporting bureaus.

Associated Press writer Eun-Kyung Kim quotes FTC Chairman Robert Pitofsky as saying, "The information industry's innovative and far-reaching, self-regulatory program will go a long way to address these concerns and lessen the risk that these services will be misused. The industry should be commended for its responsiveness and commitment." However, Pitofsky also expressed concern that the deal failed to give individuals enough access to certain types of public information, including mortgage agreements, marriage and divorce licenses and birth certificates. He said access to such court documents would allow people to discover and correct any mistakes.

AP further quotes the chairman as observing, "We trust the industry will bring the same spirit of cooperation to resolving these remaining issues. We also encourage industries doing business on-line to develop similar self-regulatory efforts to protect consumers' privacy." The wire service says the agreement calls for the 14 companies not to release to the general public certain types of non-public information, including:

- '• Social Security numbers.
- '• Birth dates.
- '• Credit history.
- '• A mother's maiden name.
- '• Unlisted telephone numbers obtained from non-public records.
- '• Unlisted addresses from telephone companies.

AP says the restrictions would not apply to sensitive information that is derived from public records, such as birth certificates or state motor vehicle information. Qualified subscribers, such as law enforcement agencies and private investigators, would still have access to all data. And the companies agreed to be reviewed once a year to ensure their compliance with the new standards. Results of the audit would be made public. The FTC report to Congress noted, "The present challenge is to protect consumers from threats to their psychological, financial and physical well-being while preserving the free flow of truthful information and other important benefits of individual reference services."

#### AOL Declares Spam Victory

America Online is declaring a victory in its battle against spam. The online service, based in Dulles, Virginia, reports that Over the Air

Equipment Inc., a Las Vegas-based e-mailer that advertised pornographic Web sites, has agreed to an injunction barring it from sending unsolicited e-mail to AOL members. "Spammers have little regard for the people who receive their solicitations -- a problem that's only magnified when a child is on the receiving end of an objectionable piece of junk e-mail," says Steve Case, AOL's chairman and CEO. "That's why we're going to continue to use every tool at our disposal to fight against spam and work toward a long-term solution to this problem, which affects all Internet users."

AOL notes that Over the Air Equipment, which until recently was sending AOL members hundreds of thousands of junk e-mails a day, agreed to a court order that prohibits the company from ever sending unsolicited e-mail to AOL members again. Over the Air Equipment also agreed to pay AOL an undisclosed sum in damages. AOL says it will apply the damages paid in the suit toward supporting industry-wide safety education initiatives aimed at young people and their parents.

"This is not just a victory for AOL members, but a victory for every Internet user," says George Vradenburg, AOL's general counsel. "The successful resolution of this lawsuit sends a pointed message to junk e-mailers that they will be held responsible for their actions." The AOL suit, which was filed Oct. 2, 1997, accused Over the Air Equipment of using deceptive practices, including falsifying e-mail transmission data, to avoid AOL's mail controls and to repeatedly transmit vast quantities of unsolicited e-mail to AOL members.

#### Western Digital Sued

A federal class-action lawsuit has been brought by investors who bought shares in hard disk maker Western Digital Corp. during a year-long period. According to the Reuter News Service, the complaint, filed in U.S. District Court in Southern California, alleges Western Digital issued false and misleading press releases and financial statements for 1996 and 1997. It also claims the company improperly deferred the write-down of its inventory of obsolete hard drives. As a result, alleges the suit, the price of Western Digital's stock was "substantially artificially" inflated between Dec. 28, 1996, and Dec. 2, 1997. The complaint also contends high-ranking Western Digital insiders disposed of thousands of their own shares of company stock at artificially inflated prices, raising millions of dollars from the sales.

#### Computer Parts Fraud Uncovered

A California company has pleaded guilty to money-laundering, ending a 5 1/2-year federal investigation that discovered theft of computer parts, fraud and illegal resales. Oliver-Allen Corp. of Larkspur, California, which posted net profits of \$2 million last year on \$42 million in revenue, has entered the plea, agreed to pay a \$100,000 fine and was sentenced to one year's probation, according to David Martin of the Reuter News Service.

Martin says the firm pleaded guilty in Staten Island, New York, to a charge of possession of stolen property. Two employees, a vice president and a salesman, also entered guilty pleas to stolen-property charges and agreed to pay fines. Reuters says the investigation began in 1992 when Joseph Lentine, then 23, and his partner, Joseph Terrano, set up companies to buy parts from IBM.

Authorities told the wire service the pair was able to circumvent normal delivery and payment procedures with help from an inside co-conspirator and to receive some \$35 million worth of computer parts, mostly for IBM AS/400

midrange computer systems. Reuters says, "According to court papers, Lentine had most of the parts shipped to his elderly grandmother, and then he and Terrano resold the parts to other companies, including Oliver-Allen.

The two men were arrested in 1993 after they fled to the Cayman Islands. Both have entered guilty pleas to wire fraud charges. Lentine was sentenced to nine years in prison, and Terrano was sentenced to over a year behind bars."

#### Some Fear V-Chips Coming to Net

Civil libertarians and computer makers are said to be scurrying to fight what some characterize as a remote possibility that the "V-chip" will be proposed for personal computers to block racy material from the Internet. Writing for the Reuter News Service, reporter Roger Fillion says the Federal Communications Commission is being asked to clarify new rules to ensure the V-chip is not applied to the Internet. As noted, the device initially is intended to let parents filter steamy programs only on television.

Writes Fillion, "The broad -- some say sloppy -- wording of the FCC's V-chip proposal has left it open to wide interpretation, critics contend. FCC officials insist the Internet is not a target. But some in the Internet community fear that Uncle Sam will 'overstep' the intent of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 when carrying out the law's V-chip provisions." Such "unintended consequences" concern Business Software Alliance, a trade group representing the computer software industry, which told the FCC its rules should reflect that most PCs are not designed to receive TV signals. Consequently, a child can't stumble across a TV show "by simply turning on a computer," the group said in a filing with the agency.

Fillion adds, "It's hard to find a group that advocates using the V-chip for the Internet. Some experts say it's not possible technically. Moreover, special Internet filters already exist. But a company that plans to make the technology says it can be adapted to cyberspace." Chris Cunningham of Tri-Vision International Ltd., a Toronto company that plans to produce a V-chip prototype designed by a Canadian professor, told the wire service, "It's my hope they would set up a similar ratings program for the Internet." Cunningham added the V-chip could be used for the Internet via high-definition digital TV.

#### ITAA Wants Fed Y2K Task Force

The Information Technology Association of America is calling on President Clinton to greet 1998 by working to head off widespread information technology disruptions in the year 2000. In a letter to the President, ITAA President Harris Miller asked the White House to create a National Year 2000 Task Force to help the nation's computers make a seamless transition to the new millennium. Suggesting that Vice President Al Gore be appointed to lead the task force, Miller wrote that its purpose should be to increase attention to solutions in the federal government, assist states and localities in solving their Year 2000 challenges and to begin tracking the implementation of Year 2000 modifications in the commercial sector.

"Such a Task Force, including representatives of all segments of our national life which provide and use ... information systems, would be tasked with bringing greater attention, and urging increased action to address this situation," wrote Miller. "Our public policy makers must make

greater use of the 'Bully Pulpit' and such vehicles as the Vice President's National Performance Review initiative to provide, respectively, increased governmental activity and marketplace assurances to this matter." Learn more about ITAA by connecting to its Web site at <http://www.itaa.org>.

#### Clinton Signs Net Copyright Law

A controversial bill to impose criminal penalties on online violators of copyright -- even those who do not profit from their actions -- has been signed into law by President Clinton. The No Electronic Theft Act, passed by Congress last month, had strong backing from the software and entertainment industries, but, as reported recently, drew criticism from science and academic groups who fear the law will inhibit research. The Reuter News Service notes the new law provides that a person who "willfully" infringes on copyrighted material worth at least \$1,000 could be subject to criminal prosecution even if he does not profit thereby. This differs from current law, under which copyright violators haven't been charged with criminal misconduct unless they profit from the violations.

Backing the new law are the Business Software Alliance, the Motion Picture Association and the Association of American Publishers, all of which had said the change is essential to protect software, music recordings and other creative products easily pirated over the Internet. Notes Reuters, "They cited a 1994 court case dismissing criminal copyright charges against an Massachusetts Institute of Technology student who posted on the Internet for free downloading copies of popular software programs."

However, as reported earlier, scientists in the Association for Computing last month urged Clinton to veto the bill because it might inadvertently criminalize many scientific publications available over the Internet, and might limit the "fair use" doctrine. Reuters says the new law includes a sliding scale of penalties depending on the severity of the copyright infringement:

For making one or more copies with a total retail value of at least \$1,000 but less than \$2,500, the violator could be imprisoned for up to one year and fined up to \$100,000. For copies with a retail value of \$2,500 or more, the violator could be imprisoned for up to three years and fined up to \$250,000. A second offense could lead to a prison term of up to six years.

#### U.S. States Getting Net Grants

The 50 U.S. states will share some \$425 million in grants to help prepare teachers and students to learn to use the Internet. In a recent White House ceremony, Vice President Al Gore announced the funding, saying, "Today, more than ever, education is the key to success and we can use technology as a powerful tool to help teach our children what they need to know to compete and win in the 21st Century. We know that technology will not just build the schools of the future, it will help to prepare our kids for that future."

According to the Reuter News Service, the money comes from the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund and is designed to help state and local efforts to improve teaching and learning with the use of technology. Also participated in the ceremony, Education Secretary Richard Riley said: "We certainly need a more up to date approach to teaching young people advanced skills." He added, "One of the most exciting aspects of American education today is developing this important link between education and technology."

#### Online Reaches Critical Mass

Online services are reaching mass market proportions, according to a new report published by IDC/LINK. The Framingham, Massachusetts, market research firm's study predicts that 17.7 million U.S. households will be online by the end of 1997. This figure equals 18 percent of all households, up from 13 percent in 1996. The report projects that approximately 40 million U.S. households, 38 percent, will subscribe to at least one service by 2001. "Barriers to use in the consumer online services market are falling much more quickly than previously anticipated," says Jill Frankle, a senior analyst in IDC/LINK's consumer Internet research program. "Declining PC prices and the introduction of the sub-\$1,000 PC have helped to drive consumer adoption of the PC and therefore, online services in the home. In addition, the wired workplace has enabled people to become more educated about the information and content that can be found within an online service and on the Internet. People are taking this knowledge home with them."

IDC/LINK believes many companies are not taking advantage of the incredible opportunity provided through the rapid growth of the U.S. consumer online services market. "The mass market Web is the new prime business location," says Frankle. "In the near future, we will see many new entrants to the market, each fighting to become the most successful content provider." IDC's Web site, located at <http://www.idc.com>, contains additional company information and recent news releases. It also offers full-text searching of recent research.

#### Clinton Honors Net Pioneers

Vinton Cerf and Robert Kahn -- inventors of the TCI/IP protocol which link military computers by radio, satellite and phone wires 25 years ago and evolved into the Internet -- have been awarded the national medal of technology by President Clinton. Cerf and Kahn told the audience in Washington yesterday they started their research to solve a military command and control problem, never dreaming it would end up spawning a vast new medium for commerce and communications.

The Reuter News Service quotes Kahn, now president of the Corporation for National Research Initiatives, as saying, "We weren't thinking in megalomaniac terms. It was a very small-scale scientific problem -- how do we get machines on different nets to work together." Cerf, senior vice president at MCI Communications Corp. added, "We were thinking about getting these three damn networks to work together."

Their protocol allowed different types of computers running different software to exchange information without any central, top-down control. "Contrary to popular myth," Reuters observes, "the goal was not to help the network survive a nuclear attack, but rather to allow computers to be connected quickly in a war situation over radio and satellite links without a pre-designed plan."

Said Cerf, "This was a self-organizing network. It was intended to be sort of dropped out of the backs of airplanes with parachutes, land on the ground and organize itself because you couldn't plan what the topology was going to be." Previous winners of the technology award include Microsoft Corp chairman Bill Gates and Gordon Moore, co-founder of Intel Corp.

#### Microsoft Ships Win 98 Beta 3

Microsoft Corp. reports it has started the next major testing phase of Windows 98, the planned update to Windows 95. The software giant says Beta

3 is now available to registered technical beta testers worldwide, meeting its stated goal of releasing the beta in December 1997. "We have integrated feedback from our customers, incorporating over 3,000 product enhancements since Windows 95," said Jonathan Roberts, Microsoft's director of Windows marketing. "We are really excited to enter the next stage of testing Windows 98, with our No. 1 goal to deliver a high-quality product."

Microsoft promises that Windows 98 will be a major step toward transforming the PC into a home information and entertainment center. Key improvements aim to provide higher quality and reliability, an easier Internet experience, better entertainment with high-performance graphics and audio and support for the latest hardware technologies. Microsoft also claims that Windows 98 will be easier for businesses to deploy. It says the product will reduce support costs and offer better performance and reliability. Windows 98 is scheduled for release in the second quarter of 1998.

#### Outlook 98 Beta 2 Released

Microsoft Corp. has begun distributing the second beta version of its Microsoft Outlook 98 messaging and collaboration client. The release, which is available on Microsoft's Web site, offers new fax functionality for Internet e-mail users, support for Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.01 and NetMeeting 2.1 conferencing software, improved calendar performance and design improvements to the product's Find and Organize tools as well as to the Outlook Today user interface.

Microsoft says it will also make a new Outlook 98 administration kit available to corporate beta testers. Microsoft notes that the first beta release, which was recommended only for advanced users and software developers, has been downloaded by more than 67,000 users in less than one month. "Outlook 98 improves upon its predecessor in the critical areas of simplicity, performance and Internet standards support," says John Ludwig, vice president of Microsoft's Internet client and collaboration division. "We've used customer feedback to deliver the best possible product for the growing numbers of Internet e-mail users as well as for our Office suite and Exchange server customers."

The beta release is available for free at <http://www.microsoft.com/outlook>. The final version of Outlook 98 is scheduled to ship in the first half of 1998. Final pricing details have yet to be announced, but Microsoft has stated that all users of Office 97, Exchange and Outlook 97 will be eligible for free upgrades to Outlook 98.

#### Boca Ships 112K Modem

Boca Research Inc. has started shipping its 112K bps DynamicDuo modem set. The Boca Raton, Florida, company reports that its \$279 device combines two K56flex fax/data modems onto a single ISA card, allowing data transfer rates over regular telephone lines at near-ISDN speeds. To reach the accelerated speeds, users need two phone lines and Internet service provider accounts. If the ISP does not yet support K56flex, the modems will fall back to 33.6K bps to achieve a combined rate of up to 67K bps. The product also allows users to place or receive calls without losing the Internet connection or interrupting a file download. Additionally, if one of the phone lines has call waiting, the 56K bps modem managing that line will drop its Internet connection to allow a call to be completed. Meanwhile, the second 56K bps modem will retain the Internet connection or continue to download the file. When the call has ended, the modem will automatically redial the ISP number, reestablishing the high-speed

connection.

Boca will bundle the 112K DynamicDuo with a software package that manages both 56K modem connections, directing each modem to constantly request and download Internet data files. The software is also responsible for splitting the data and graphic files in half, enabling the PC to receive one half of the file through one modem connection while receiving the second half in parallel through the second connection.

"End users want a faster data communications product now, without having to invest a great deal of money," says Tony Zalenski, Boca's President and CEO. "We recognize the need for a transitional product to help end users migrate from today's analog modems to tomorrow's xDSL and cable modem technologies. By delivering our 112K DynamicDuo to market, we have offered a robust, cost-effective, higher-speed modem that end users can use today." More details are available on the Web at <http://www.bocaresearch.com>

#### Iomega Delays Jaz 2GB Release

Iomega Corp. says its new Jaz 2GB disk drive, scheduled for release by the end of this year, has been delayed until the first quarter of 1998. "The decision not to ship Jaz 2GB this quarter is based on allowing Iomega to conduct further quality testing to assure that Jaz 2GB fully meets our rigorous quality standards before releasing the product for customer shipment," says Fred Forsyth, president of the Roy, Utah, company's professional products division. Upon release, the external version of the Jaz 2GB will sell for \$649; the internal model will be priced at \$549. A three-pack of Jaz 2GB disks will cost \$149. More details are available at Iomega's Web site, which is located at <http://www.iomega.com>.

#### Online Stamp Sales Test Begins

The U.S. Postal Service has begun selling postage stamps and related products online in a short-term test. During the two week trial, which ends Dec. 28, 2,300 pre-registered customers will be able to purchase a limited selection of products on the Postal Service's Web site (<http://www.usps.gov>), and have the option to pay for purchases with their credit cards. The service is scheduled to be offered to the general public early next year.

"In today's competitive environment, our customers told us they wanted to have the convenience of being able to purchase stamps and stamp products online -- quickly and safely," says Postmaster General Marvin Runyon."

Just as the Postal Service has protected the integrity of the mail for more than 200 years, StampsOnline will incorporate the latest technology to ensure the security of online transactions." StampsOnline shoppers will browse through the online post office, make selections and fill their virtual "shopping cart." Utilizing industry standard security measures, each online credit card transaction will be electronically encrypted. Customers not using a credit card will be able to place orders by calling 800-STAMP24 or printing an order form and mailing it to the Postal Service's Stamp Fulfillment Services unit.

#### Sculley Touts Net Image Business

A "monster market," useful to medical practitioners and clothes vendors alike, is how former Apple Computer Inc. CEO John Sculley sees high-resolution Internet images. Speaking this weekend at Fall Internet World trade show in New York, Sculley demonstrated how Live Picture Corp's Reality Studio tool can zoom in on pictures posted on the World Wide Web to



reveal the texture of a sports jacket or the hands of a clock set in a car's dashboard.

Of course, Sculley has a vested interest in the technology. These days, he is chairman of Live Picture, a California-based digital imaging company. Covering the speech, the Reuter News Service notes, "While high-density imaging is not new to the Internet, Live Picture is counting on the relatively small file size used by Reality Studio to set the product apart." Live Picture expects to begin shipping Reality Studio in March, but the technology will be available for download next week from the company's Web site (<http://www.Livepicture.com>).

#### Microsoft Office Embraces HTML

Hypertext Markup Language, the Internet standard protocol known as HTML, is being embraced by Microsoft Corp. in the next version of its popular Office software suite, in an effort to foster more efficient use of corporate Intranets. The Reuter News Service quotes officials with the Redmond, Washington, software giant as saying the firm will give higher priority to saving documents in HTML, right alongside its own proprietary format. "Documents written in Office applications, when saved in HTML format, can be viewed in any web browser, and can more easily be posted to web pages," Reuters notes. By making HTML a high priority option, the software will allow Office users to turn their word processor or spreadsheet documents into web-ready documents. They can then keep Intranets fresh with data, and bypass the process of submitting data to another person who then transfers it into HTML.

#### Intel Dolls a Surprise Hit

Hey, Intel Corp., if the chip thing doesn't work out, you can always make it in the bean-bag doll business! That's right -- a surprise hit of the current Christmas shopping season is the computer chip maker's bean-and-batting-filled toys based on the shimmering clean-room technicians who dance to "Shake Your Groove Thing" in its commercials. Business writer William McCall of The Associated Press reports an initial promotional production run of 25,000 of the dolls has mushroomed into an order for 500,000. In fact, the company already has sold more than 200,000 dolls, mostly to Intel employees, says Intel spokesman Bill Calder. Intel is making the 7-inch-tall figures available to the public in limited quantities for about \$7 on the Internet (<http://www.cdw.com/gifts/default.asp>) and through selected retail outlets, including CompUSA. "It's definitely bigger than we expected," said Joanne Hagn, Intel's logo merchandise manager at company headquarters in Santa Clara, California. "It's turning into kind of a phenomenon that's spreading countrywide."

#### Study: DVD Awareness Low

Despite ample publicity surrounding this year's launch of DVD (Digital Versatile Disc) hardware and software, a new study from the Yankee Group suggests that consumer awareness of the format remains surprisingly low. Only 28 percent of the more than 1,900 U.S. households surveyed by the Boston market research firm were familiar with DVD, a new optical storage format that can be used to distribute full-length movies, computer software and other types of information. Among consumers who had heard about DVD, about 13 percent said they were "very" or "somewhat likely" to purchase a DVD player within the next 12 months.

"Raising DVD's profile in the marketplace should be a top priority for all

of the hardware and software vendors backing the format," says James Penhune, Yankee Group's program manager. "Purchase intentions are fairly high among those households who are aware of DVD, but consumers who haven't heard of the product can't possibly buy it." DVD movie players and titles have been available in the U.S. since March, while PCs equipped with DVD-ROM drives began shipping during the third quarter. Still, DVD is competing for the consumer's attention with a host of other new "convergence" products that are available now or on the drawing board," says Penhune. "Our research shows higher levels of awareness for Digital TV, for example, which is not expected to reach the market for at least a year."

#### Internet World, Shopper Fold

Magazine publisher Mecklermedia Corp. is shutting down bimonthly Internet Shopper and the monthly Internet World, though the latter's name will be transferred to a Mecklermedia weekly that has been called Web Week up until now. Writing in The Wall Street Journal's interactive edition, reporter Nick Wingfield notes this leaves the Westport, Connecticut, company with one print publication. Mecklermedia said the closings were made in order to consolidate its operations around high-tech trade shows and Web sites. As reported, this isn't the only company suffering from a shakeout of publications focused on the Net. At least a dozen magazines have gone under because of poor readership and a dwindling base of advertising, including Ziff Davis Publishing Co.'s Internet Underground and CMP Media Inc.'s NetGuide. "Analysts say consumer Internet magazines have been especially hard-hit," Wingfield observes, "as users increasingly gather information about the Internet from the Internet itself." Mecklermedia Chairman/CEO Alan Meckler told Wingfield the Internet Shopper magazine illustrated the pressures, adding online shoppers are more apt to look for information about goods online because it is more timely.

Said Meckler, "It became very logical to me that, unless we did (the magazine) daily, anybody who was going to shop online was going to research it online." The Journal notes Mecklermedia earlier closed a technically oriented publication called Web Developer. Internet World magazine was revamped earlier this year to focus on a business audience, but the company was concerned that market costs associated with its paid-circulation format would become too costly. Meckler said Web Week also is aimed at a business audience, but goes to a qualified audience of 125,000 Internet professionals, a more attractive demographic for advertisers.

#### Slate E-Mag to Charge Readers

Starting early next year, Microsoft Corp.'s Slate electronic magazine will begin charging for subscriptions, though neither the price nor the timing of the move has yet been determined. Publisher Rogers Weed told The Associated Press, that with about 140,000 readers, the magazine found it finally feasible to charge subscription fees. Slate debuted in June 1996 with Michael Kinsley, formerly of The New Republic, as editor and a promise to bill readers \$19.95 for a year's subscription. In his introductory column, Kinsley wrote: "We believe that expecting readers to share the cost, as they do in print, is the only way serious journalism on the Web can be self-supporting." However, billing problems and readers' grumbling caused Slate to "chicken out," as Kinsley observed early this year. AP says Slate is the second largest e-zine on the Web, after HotWired, a publication from Wired Ventures Inc. HotWired, with about 800,000 registered members, does not charge for subscriptions and has no plans to charge in the future, said spokesman Andrew de Vries.

## Wrong Font Leads to Court Losses

Using the wrong font and perhaps too small a point size in the printing of court filings on two different occasions is being cited as the reason the state of Georgia has lost an appeal of a multi-million-dollar lawsuit. Reporting from Atlanta, United Press International writes, "The Georgia Court of Appeals twice dismissed an appeal of a jury's \$2.7 million personal injury award against the state because the Attorney General's office used a Times New Roman font in its paperwork instead of the Courier font the court requires." Because of the fiasco, Attorney General Thurbert Baker says he has demoted a top aide.

UPI says a county court had awarded \$2.7 million to a Georgia man who was seriously injured when he was hit by a drunk driver as he worked at a highway construction site. Baker's office filed a brief in September asking for the award against the Department of Transportation to be overturned. "The first brief was rejected by the court because the type was too small," UPI reports. "The court allowed the brief to be re-filed, but the court said the second filing was 'nothing more than a computer printout or photocopy of the original brief.' The state filed the brief a third time, using the correct font, but it was too late." The case was settled this month for \$1 million. Attorneys and the appeals court told the wire service the font requirement is intended to ensure documents are easy to read.

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#### JUDGE'S TEMPORARY ORDER: MICROSOFT CAN'T BUNDLE BROWSER

A federal judge in the U.S. District in Washington issued a temporary order declaring that Microsoft may no longer bundle its Internet Explorer browsing software with the Windows operating system, until such time as the judge receives a report to the court from a Harvard Law School professor who will serve as a "special master" to study the complex legal and factual issues the case presents. Though refusing to impose the million-dollar-a-day penalty against that the Justice Department had requested, Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson wrote: "The probability that Microsoft will not only continue to reinforce its operating system monopoly by its licensing practices, but might also acquire yet another monopoly in the Internet browser market, is simply too great to tolerate indefinitely until the issue is finally resolved." Industry analysts are predicting the basic dispute over placing limits on Microsoft's power will not be resolved for a number of years. (New York Times 12 Dec 97)

#### MOTOROLA LOOKS TO SYSTEMS-ON-A-CHIP FOR ITS FUTURE

Motorola is giving up its dream of challenging Intel in the desktop microprocessor market, focusing instead on a new breed of customized chips that will merge memory, logic and other circuit types onto one silicon wedge. "We intend to turn what has been a weakness -- a broad array of technologies -- into a powerful weapon no one else has," says the president of Motorola's Semiconductor Products Sector. The company sports a portfolio of more than 50,000 chips, including the PowerPC microprocessor that Motorola had sought to promote via Apple Macintosh computers. System chip sales currently run only \$4 billion a year, or 3% of the world market, but by 2001, sales could top \$70 billion -- triple the size of today's microprocessor market. (Business Week 15 Dec 97)

#### WORLDGATE MOVES OVERSEAS

WorldGate Communications, a startup company that offers Internet access via cable television systems, has signed an agreement to test its service on cable systems in Singapore, the U.K., Venezuela, New Zealand and Austria. If the trials are successful, WorldGate will be looking at 3.8 potential new customers, in addition to its 150,000 subscriber base in the U.S. The company offers access to the World Wide Web and e-mail through customers' television sets for about \$5 a month. The WorldGate system differs from competitors such as WebTV, because does not require the purchase of a set-top box. "There's a much bigger market for a lower-cost, lower-function product for the mass market," says WorldGate's CEO. (Wall Street Journal 12 Dec 97)

#### AVOIDING "PSEUDO-INTERACTIVITY"

Learning Technologies Interactive founder Luyen Chou says most interactive software today is basically boring: "With my background as a teacher, one of the fascinating things I've seen is how quickly kids -- and even Gen Xers -- are becoming bored with the genre-based multimedia titles, whether they're shoot-'em-up games or reference products. What we're hearing from the marketplace is a growing impatience with pseudo-interactivity. They're looking for something that interacts with their synapses as much as their fingertips." (Upside Jan 98)

## CLINTON TO ORDER YEAR 2000 FIX

The Clinton administration intends to order more than a dozen federal agencies to redirect hundreds of millions of dollars in their technology budgets to fix the year 2000 computer problem, an administration official said today. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) plans to order the agencies to "reprogram" their existing technology budgets to direct funds into the year 2000 fix, an agency official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. These funds were already appropriated by Congress, but OMB can order the money directed to other purposes. An OMB review of 24 cabinet agencies showed that seven had made "insufficient progress" in fixing the year 2000 problem while nine remained "of concern" and eight had the problem under control, the official said. (Ottawa Sun 12 Dec 97)

## DESIGNING FOR THE WORLD WIDE WEB

Because most Web users tend to be North American, many Web designers are oblivious to the subtle cultural connotations that language, colors and design can take on in a foreign setting. Companies wishing to internationalize their sites should be particularly sensitive to language (no colloquialisms, such as using "wicked" to mean "good"), colors (white denotes purity in Western countries, but death in many Asian nations), and the gestures made by models (showing the palms, as in a wave, is considered an insult in some Mediterranean countries). "Color takes on enormously different overtones from one country to the next," says one corporate globalization consultant. "That doesn't mean you can't use those colors. It just means you want to rethink what the visuals look like on your pages and on your links." (CIO Web Business 1 Dec 97)

## HIGH-TECH INDUSTRY PRAISES CANADIAN IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS

Canada's high-technology industry praised that country's immigration authorities for extending an experiment to speed up the entry of people with specialized software skills into Canada. The Software Human Resource Council said that more than 200 people have already entered Canada under the rules that allow companies to bring in software designers without first having to prove that no Canadians can fill the job. The experiment started last spring, despite protests from some legislators who felt it was unfair to unemployed Canadians, and will now be extended until the end of March. The Council expects the number of software specialists coming to Canada will reach 400 to 600 by the end of the experiment. (Ottawa Citizen 9 Dec 97)

## CYBERBOOZE ... OR CYBERSNOOZE?

New York state attorney general Dennis Vacco says an undercover sting operation has shown that underage customers can order alcoholic beverages through the World Wide Web and have them delivered to their homes with "no questions asked." Merchants who sell wine and beer via the Internet scoff at the notion that this is a real, rather than a theoretical, problem. One vendor pointed out his that his beer sells for \$27 for two six-packs, and said it was absurd to think that a teenager would pay that much and then wait several days for delivery. A spokesman for one beer-of-the-month club called the controversy an "emotional red herring" and blamed the beverage wholesalers for instigating it to protect their traditional market mechanisms. (Atlanta Journal-Constitution 13 Dec 97)

## COMPANIES VIE FOR SET-TOP BOX BUSINESS

Microsoft, Intel and other high-tech companies are negotiating with Telecommunications Inc. in a major bid to supply advanced set-top boxes for the next-generation of cable television. TCI is expected to purchase between 10 million and 25 million of the devices, and companies reportedly are offering "very creative financing" in order to snare the coveted contract. "If you can win the TCI business, you've won a very important chunk of the cable operator's business," says an Intel VP. Meanwhile, TCI CEO John Malone says he expects to sign contracts with several providers: "If there were a single operating system, it would have to be virtually owned by the cable industry. We don't want to be slave to any proprietary system. We don't want any of them to get such a proprietary hook that it's either junk \$5 billion in investment or go ahead with their next plan." (Wall Street Journal 15 Dec 97)

#### MICROSOFT APPEALS COURT RULING

Microsoft has appealed the ruling of U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson, charging that the judge exceeded his authority by issuing a temporary injunction against the company's practice of bundling its Internet Explorer software into the Microsoft Windows 95 operating system. Microsoft has also indicated that, as a matter of fact, none of the large PC manufacturers plan to ship Windows without Internet Explorer, even though the court order allows them to do so. (Washington Post 16 Dec 97)

#### FCC REDUCES TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS

The Federal Communications Commission has tentatively decided to reduce (by about \$750 million less than the \$2.65 billion authorized) the fees that long-distance companies will pay to support investments in Internet access by schools, libraries, and health care institutions. The FCC decision came after the phone companies said the fees could lead to higher rates - and after AT&T and MCI said they would specify the charges on customer bills. (New York Times 15 Dec 97)

#### QWEST'S INTERNET TELEPHONY OFFERS 7.5-CENT LONG-DISTANCE CALLS

Qwest Communications will be using Internet technology -- which it says is more efficient than the aging switching networking owned by its long-distance phone rivals -- to offer long-distance calls at any time of day or night for just 7.5 cents a minute. The service will be rolled out to 25 cities by summer 1998 and 125 cities by the end of the year. Industry analyst Brian Adamik says: "We are seeing breakthroughs every couple of months. Consumers may soon find they can no longer tell whether a call is going over the Internet." (Wall Street Journal 15 Dec 97)

#### INTEL EYES THE OTHER 60%

Intel CEO Andy Grove explains his company's recent switch from focusing on high-end desktop microprocessors, where it dominates 90% of the market, to engineering chips specifically designed for cheap PCs and low-cost electronic devices: "First of all, there are \$20 processors in our portfolio today, in the embedded area [chips that go into products such as cars and printers]. I don't think the news is going to be in \$20 processors. I think the news is going to be in penetration into a wider population - the proverbial 60% of U.S. homes that don't have a computer. Why don't those 60% have a computer? What we're trying to do is put a need in there, and at the same time, make this stuff affordable. And if that formula starts working, we want to make the same kind of money we're

accustomed to. And the only way we can do that is to design for the target." (Business Week 22 Dec 97)

#### INTEL AND SUN FORM ALLIANCE BASED ON MERCED CHIP

Intel and Sun have reached an patent cross-licensing agreement that will allow the two companies to share technologies related to the new Merced chip, which was designed by Intel and Hewlett-Packard and which will begin shipping in 1999. Sun will also adapt Solaris, its version of the Unix operating system, to run on the Merced chip. (Wall Street Journal 16 Dec 97)

#### SUN, COMPAQ BEEF UP CUSTOMER SERVICE

After cracking the upscale corporate computer market long enjoyed by the likes of IBM and Hewlett-Packard, Sun Microsystems and Compaq Computer now are beginning to focus on keeping the customers they've won. "Five years ago, service was almost never a determining factor," says the president of Sun's service division. "Now, at least in servers, it is almost always one of the two or three most important factors. It's a weapon; it's an advantage." While Sun is moving quickly on providing the kind of hand-holding that many corporate clients require, industry observers expect that Compaq probably will solve the problem by purchasing a major services operation, such as Unisys, Wang Laboratories, Decision One or possibly Digital Equipment Corporation, which already has a contract for hardware maintenance and software support for Compaq machines. (Investor's Business Daily 15 Dec 97)

#### NETSCAPE'S BATTLE TACTICS

Seeking to take advantage of the court order prohibiting Microsoft from requiring PC manufacturers that license The Windows 95 operating system to install Internet Explorer browser on the computers they sell, Netscape Communications is taking three major actions: it is using hundreds of Web sites to provide instructions and software for eliminating Explorer from a user's computer; negotiating with PC makers to convince them to add Netscape Navigator to new computers; and launching a massive campaign to distribute Navigator through third parties. (Washington Post 17 Dec 97)

#### JUSTICE SEEKS CONTEMPT RULING IN MICROSOFT CASE

The U.S. Justice Department is asking a federal judge to hold Microsoft in contempt for what it terms a "naked attempt" to circumvent the purpose of a court order mandating the separation of its Internet Explorer browser software from its Windows operating system. "Microsoft has gone from tying its products to tying the hands of its vendors," says an assistant attorney general for the antitrust division. "The more Microsoft continues its practices, the more consumers are harmed." A Microsoft VP counters that the company is complying with the court order by offering PC makers a choice of deleting the Internet Explorer software, which then impairs the newer Windows 95 operating system, or installing an older 1995 version that works without the browser. Meanwhile, an antitrust attorney following the case warns: "If one is in violation of the spirit of an order while complying with the letter, that can indeed come back to haunt you." (Wall Street Journal 18 Dec 97)

#### CLINTON HONORS NET PIONEERS, OKAYS \$96 MILLION IN NEW TECH FUNDING

President Clinton has awarded Vint Cerf and Robert E. Kahn the National



Medal of Technology for their creation of the TCP/IP protocol. In addition, Clinton announced \$96 million in new funding for technology R&D projects, including smaller microcomputer and microprocessor development, handheld videophones, and radio ID cards for missing children. The new money will combine with industry-pledged funds totaling \$200 million in R&D for government-sponsored projects in 1998. (TechWeb 16 Dec 97)

#### TACTICAL SHIFT BY WORKSTATION COMPANIES

Silicon Graphics Inc.'s plan to allow SGI graphics software to run on Microsoft's Windows NT operating system provides new evidence that a growing number of companies are giving up on Unix and instead standardizing on Windows NT. SGI hopes to be able to use its experience in developing high-end graphics software without having to spend a great deal of time building the underlying technology represented by an operating system. (Washington Post 17 Dec 97)

#### DEBATE OVER PRIVACY ISSUE: REGULATION VS. SELF-REGULATION

Civil libertarians are unhappy with the Federal Trade Commission's decision to allow self-policing and "voluntary guidelines" by companies that maintain personal information on people -- companies such as Lexis- Nexis, Equifax, and Information America. "Privacy Times" newsletter editor Evan Hendricks says: "The reality is that many of the players here don't have a very good history of complying either with the Fair Credit Reporting Act or voluntary guidelines. Congress should just do its job and pass a law and give Americans the rights they deserve." But FTC chairman Robert Pitofsky says: "This is an impressive step in the direction of self-regulation. The history of self-regulation is you start here and then see where you go in the future." (New York Times 18 Dec 97)

#### NEW DOMAIN NAME GROUP OFFERS TO EXPAND MEMBERSHIP

The Geneva-based Policy Oversight Committee -- the group attempting to replace the U.S. government's role as Internet domain name allocator - has offered to increase its membership from 11 to 20 members, including representatives of Internet service providers and users. The committee hopes this latest move will help to deflect some of the criticism it has faced, but some members say this latest move is too insignificant to give it the moral authority it will need to do its job effectively. Currently, there are 200 organizations supporting the Geneva group's efforts. "I think that 1,000-plus members need to be recruited first to give it credibility," says one British committee member. The U.S. will give up its responsibility on March 31, 1998. (TechWeb 16 Dec 97)

#### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AT CAL STATE

The Chronicle of Higher Education is issuing the following correction of its article last week about a proposed technology plan for the California State University system: Rather than automatically receiving the money that the system currently budgets each year for computing technology, the partnership envisioned in the plan would make proposals to individual campuses to win their business. Also, people who are now employees of the university system would remain so. (Chronicle of Higher Education 19 Dec 97)

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The Linux Advocate

by Scott Dowdle

Login:

Hello again. Boy, I sure have had a very busy last few weeks. As I have mentioned before, I am a student Montana State University Northern, Great Falls campus and in the past few weeks I've had two papers due as well as finals... so I haven't had enough time to devote to this installment... but I wanted to include something so here it is. :)

News items:

On December 1st, Red Hat Software released Red Hat Linux 5.0 and shortly after that they released a minor upgrade to ApplixWare as well. Being an ApplixWare owner I decided to order the upgrade and it was rather nicely priced... and only put me out \$15 plus shipping. Red Hat seemed to be a little slow on the shipping because it took about 2 weeks to get my 2 day Federal Express package but I can't complain really as the ApplixWare upgrade happens to include Red Hat Linux 5.0. Only having gotten the package this past Monday I've not had a lot of time to put all of it through the paces. I did get it all installed though and I decided to just go ahead and do a clean install of RHL 5.0 to see what all had changed with the installation program. It was the easiest install I've done in my 3 year history running Linux and I must state that distribution makers have really mainstreamed Linux.

I'll not bother to provide details on what's new with RHL 5.0 (and I'm still working on a review of ApplixWare for a future column) but I will say that they have added several new user level GUI tools as well as provide some command line equivalents of several of their previously GUI-only system administration tools. It appears that Red Hat is listening. There is much more to the upgrade but one other noteworthy software package addition is The Gimp. The Gimp (see <http://www.gimp.org>) is a completely fantastic image manipulation program that is an attempt at cloning Adobe's PhotoShop application. While the version of The Gimp included with RHL 5.0 is a few months out of date it is still rather good and since it's easily installed with Red Hat's RPM package manager the home user has it up and running in no time flat. If one wants to keep up on The Gimp development just point your favorite ftp client at <ftp.gimp.org> and look around until you find their rpm directory.

The Gimp folks are putting out new releases in various compressed formats and RPM happens to be one of them so upgrading to the latest version is a snap. Look for more details next column but in the mean time feel free to check out Red Hat's Online User's Guide to 5.0 at the following URL:

<http://www.redhat.com/support/docs/rhl/manual/manual/>

I'm sure there have been other noteworthy news items since the last column but my mind is drawing a blank as I write this and for that I'm sorry. Please stay tuned for the next column installment. I'm done with school for this semester so I should have more freetime.

Logout:

Ah, Christmas is approaching so quickly. My parents are flying into Great Falls, Montana in a few hours from Memphis, Tennessee and I haven't seen them in about 2 years so this is going to be a very festive holiday season for my family. I want to wish everyone out there in Linux land (as well as everywhere else) happiness and joy over the next few weeks and I'll see you right back here next time, ok? :)

fsereno@streport.com

The Kids' Computing Corner  
Computer news and software reviews  
from a parent's point of view

From Frank's Desk

This is the last issue before the holidays, so I'd like to wish everyone Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah. May you enjoy the love of friends and family during this season of joy and holiday shopping. Let's try to bring the spirit of these holy days to every day. Peace, joy and love to all.

Hoyle Classic Board Games  
Windows CD-ROM  
for ages 6 and up  
about \$30

Sierra On-line  
3380 146th Place SE  
Suite 300  
Bellevue WA 98007  
800-757-7707  
<http://www.sierra.com>

Program Requirements

OS: Windows 3.1  
CPU: 486/66  
HD Space: 4.5 MB  
Memory: 8 MB  
Graphics: SVGA  
CD-ROM: Double-speed  
Audio: 8-bit sound card  
Optional: modem for Internet play

review by Frank Sereno (fsereno@streport.com)

If you're doing some last minute Christmas shopping, you won't find a better family gift than Sierra's Hoyle Classic Board Games. This assortment of classic games offers challenging fun to all ages at a fantastic bargain price.

This package actually features thirteen games. The ten board games are Backgammon, Battling Ships, Checkers, Chess, Chinese Checkers, Dominoes, Pachisi, Snakes and Ladders, Yacht and Zen Bones. In addition, the disc includes two bonus demo games from Sierra's Hoyle Classic Card Games, Hearts and Pyramid. Finally, you get Hoyle Blackjack on a separate CD-ROM.

Each game is fun and done well. I think the Battling Ships game alone is worth the \$30 street price for this package. What really makes the game shine for younger players is the assortment of zany computer opponents. You can choose from twelve animated opponents and you have the option to set their "attitude meter." Have you ever been trash-talked by a sweet-talking, silver-haired grandmother? Computer opponents can be set to three levels of competence to make the games challenging for players of all ages. In addition, Sierra includes Internet-play options if you ever get bored with the provided opponents.

Sierra always provides great value in its products. Hoyle Classic Board

Games is no exception. If you're looking for a treat for the entire family, Hoyle Classic Board Games is sure to please all with its great humor, classic games and energetic competition.

#### In the News

#### KID'S TUTOR TECHNOLOGYT PROVIDES SPECIAL INSTRUCTION IN JUMPSTART 1ST GRADE MATHT AND JUMPSTART 2ND GRADE MATHT, NEW FROM KNOWLEDGE ADVENTURE

New grade-based, math-specific JumpStart CD-ROMs feature tutorial lessons, offering problem-solving strategies to help kids master math fundamentals

GLENDAL, Calif., Dec. 16, 1997 - Knowledge Adventure announced today that the company is enriching its #1 selling grade-based JumpStart Learning SystemT with its exclusive Kid's Tutor TechnologyT, which has been augmented in the recently shipping JumpStart 1st Grade MathT and JumpStart 2nd Grade MathT. By incorporating a special tutoring aide, these two new math-specific JumpStart CD-ROMs help kids progressively master an entire school year of age-appropriate math curricula and build a solid foundation for success in school.

In JumpStart 1st Grade Math and JumpStart 2nd Grade Math, the Kid's Tutor Technology automatically detects when the child is having difficulty and offers special instruction to teach important math concepts. In each CD-ROM, kids can access a reference book with approximately 25 mini-lessons that break down problems and concepts into logical, easy-to-understand steps.

Says David Fratto, executive producer at Knowledge Adventure, "JumpStart 1st Grade Math and JumpStart 2nd Grade Math prepare kids for success in math and build their confidence through a comprehensive, multi-step process. Each program introduces kids to progressively challenging concepts that reinforce what they're learning at school. This dedicated, grade-specific approach to math provides kids the necessary foundation for mastering the next math concept.

"One of the most important considerations in teaching children math is ensuring that they really understand the logic behind the problem-solving process. To provide kids the needed, on-hand support to learn important early math skills, we strengthened and expanded our existing Kid's Tutor Technology in both of these math-specific JumpStart programs."

#### JumpStart 1st Grade Math

In JumpStart 1st Grade Math, children ages 5 to 7 join Frankie the Dachshund (from JumpStart 1st GradeT and JumpStart 1st Grade ReadingT) on a charming adventure through an oversized backyard. After being disrespectful of the creatures that co-exist with him in the backyard, the Queen Bee casts a magical spell on Frankie that shrinks him down to the size of an ant. Kids can help restore him to normal size by playing a variety of fun games and activities that build important math fundamentals such as:

- Sorting and Grouping
- Counting Money and Telling Time
- Basic Geometry and Spatial Relations
- Subtraction
- Addition
- Sequencing and Patterns

## Measurement and Estimation

### JumpStart 2nd Grade Math

In JumpStart 2nd Grade Math, children ages 6 to 8 join CJ the Frog and Edison the Firefly (from JumpStart 2nd GradeT) on an enchanting medieval adventure. The evil rodent Duke Ratso has taken over the castle and imprisoned the royal family in a magic mirror. Using a book of magic spells, kids help CJ and Edison disarm Ratso's traps by playing exciting games that expand on math fundamentals introduced in JumpStart 1st Grade Math such as:

- Telling Time
- Addition with Carrying Over
- Subtraction with Borrowing
- Measurement and Fractions
- Geometry
- Multiplication
- Logic and Problem-Solving

### Adaptive Learning Technology

In addition to the Kid's Tutor Technology, JumpStart 1st Grade Math and JumpStart 2nd Grade Math both feature Knowledge Adventure's exclusive Adaptive Learning TechnologyT. This innovative technology automatically adjusts the game difficulty level to the student's skill level -- keeping kids motivated and challenged as their learning needs change over the course of the school year.

The Adaptive Learning Technology also integrates with the Kid's Tutor Technology. Each tutorial lesson offers three versions (introductory, intermediate, advanced) that correspond with the three levels of game difficulty, offering players the appropriate degree of support. For instance, an introductory lesson will appear if the child is playing on Level 1; a more advanced lesson will appear if the child is playing on Level 3. This highly customized approach helps kids understand the logic behind progressively challenging math concepts as they advance through the games.

### Key Features and Benefits

JumpStart 1st Grade Math and JumpStart 2nd Grade Math also offer the following key features and benefits:

- Grade-based approach teaches a full year of math curriculum specific to the 1st grade and 2nd grade levels.

- Exciting, arcade-style games and rich, vibrant art keep kids engaged while teaching important math fundamentals and building a solid foundation for success in school.

- An extensive Progress Report helps parents monitor their child's progress in all math subject areas.

- Printable workbook activities extend and reinforce learning away from the computer.

### Availability, Pricing and System Requirements

JumpStart 1st Grade Math and JumpStart 2nd Grade Math are both immediately available at most major computer stores and mass-merchant chains nationwide. The Windows 95/Windows 3.1/Macintosh CD-ROMs are expected to be priced at approximately \$30 each. Customers can call (800) 542-4240 for sales and ordering information. System requirements for both products are

as follows:

Windows 95 and Windows 3.1 CD-ROM  
486DX66 PC or higher; double speed CD-ROM drive; Windows 3.1 or Windows 95;  
16 MB RAM; SVGA 640x480 at 256 colors; MPC-compatible sound card.

Macintosh CD-ROM  
68040 or Power Mac; double speed CD-ROM drive; System 7.1 or higher; 16 MB  
of RAM; 13" or larger color monitor.

Knowledge Adventure, Inc. is a leading educational software publisher best known for pioneering grade-based software with the best-selling, award-winning JumpStart Learning System. Offering a total solution to help kids succeed in school, the JumpStart series includes nearly 20 full-grade and subject-based products for children ages 18 months to 11 years. The company is also known for its Adventure series and new Activity Center line. Founded in 1991, Knowledge Adventure is a subsidiary of CUC Software Services, Inc., a subsidiary of CUC International Inc. (NYSE: CU).

# # #

CHRISTMAS! STR FOCUS .....A familiar tale, with a new twist!

### The Night Before Christmas

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the ship  
Not a circuit was buzzing, not one microchip;  
The phasers were hung in the armory securely,  
In hopes that no aliens would get up that early.  
The crewmen were nestled all snug in their bunks  
(Except for the few who were partying drunks);  
And Picard in his nightshirt and Bev in her lace,  
Had just settled down for a neat face-to-face...  
When out in the halls there arose such a racket,  
That we leapt from our beds, pulling on pants and jacket.

Away to the lifts we all shot like a gun,  
Leapt into the cars and yelled loudly, "Deck One!"  
The bridge Red-Alert lights, which flashed through the din,  
Gave a lustre of Hades to objects within.  
When, what, on the viewscreen, should our eyes behold,  
But a weird kind of sleigh, and some guy who looked old.  
But the glint in his eyes was so strange and askew  
That we knew in a moment it had to be Q.  
His sleigh grew much larger as closer he came.  
Then he zapped on the bridge and addressed us by name:  
"It's Riker! It's Data! It's Worf and Jean-Luc!  
It's Geordi! And Wesley, the genetic fluke!  
To the top of the bridge, to the top of the hall!  
Now float away! Float away! Float away all!"  
As leaves in the autumn are whisked off the street,  
So the floor of the bridge came away from our feet,

And up to the ceiling our bodies they flew,  
As the captain called out, "What the hell is this, Q?!"  
The prankster just laughed and expanded his grin,  
And, snapping his fingers, he vanished again.

As we took in our plight and were looking around,  
The spell was removed, and we crashed to the ground.  
Then Q, dressed in fur from his head to his toe,  
Appeared once again, to continue the show.  
"That's enough!" cried the captain,  
"You'll stop this at once!"

And Riker said, "Worf! Take aim at this dunce!"  
"I'm deeply offended, Jean-Luc," replied Q,  
"I just want to celebrate Christmas with you."  
As we scoffed at his words, he produced a large sack.  
He dumped out the contents and took a step back.  
"I've brought gifts," he said, "just to show I'm sincere.  
There's something delightful for everyone here."  
He sat on the floor and dug into his pile,  
And handed out gifts with his most charming smile:  
"For Counsellor Troi, there's no need to explain.  
Here's Tylenol-Beta for all of your pain.  
For Worf I've some mints as his breath's not too great,  
And for Geordi LaForge, an inflatable date.  
For Wesley, some hormones, and Clearasil-Plus;  
For Data, a joke book; for Riker, a truss.  
For Beverly Crusher, there's sleek lingerie,  
And for Jean-Luc, the thrill of just seeing her that way."  
Then he sprang to his feet with that grin on his face  
And, clapping his hands, disappeared into space.  
But we heard him exclaim as he dwindled from sight,  
"Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good flight!"

Based on "A Visit from St. Nicholas" by Clement C. Moore  
Adaptation Copyright 1990, Eric R. Rountree

Special Notice!! STR Infofile                      File format for Articles

#### File Format for STReport

All articles submitted to STReport for publication must be sent in the following format. Please use the format requested. Any files received that do not conform will not be used. The article must be in an importable word processor format for Word 6.0 and/or Word Perfect 7.. The margins are .05" left and 1.0" Monospaced fonts are not to be used. Please use proportional fonting only and at Twelve (12) points.

- No Indenting on any paragraphs!!



- No Indenting of any lines or "special gimmickery"
- No underlining!
- Columns shall be achieved through the use of tabs only. Or, columns in Word or Word Perfect format. Do NOT, under any circumstances, use the space bar.
- Most of all.. PLEASE! No ASCII "ART"!!
- There is no limits as to size, articles may be split into two if lengthy
- Actual Artwork should be in GIF, PCX, JPG, TIF, BMP, WMF file formats
- Artwork (pictures, graphs, charts, etc.) should be sent along with the article separately
- Please use a single font only in an article. TTF New Times Roman 12pt. is preferred. (VERY Strong Hint)

If there are any questions please use either E-Mail or call. On another note. the ASCII version of STReport is fast approaching the "end of the line" As the major Online Services move away from ASCII.. So shall STReport. All in the name of progress and improved readability. The amount of reader mail expressing a preference for our Adobe PDF enhanced issue is running approximately 15 to 1 over the ASCII edition. I might add however, the requests for our issues to be done in HTML far outnumber both PDF and ascii. HTML is now under consideration. We'll keep you posted. Besides, STReport will not be caught in the old, worn out "downward compatibility dodge" we must move forward.

However, if the ASCII readership remains as high, rest assured. ASCII will stay. Right now, since STReport is offered on a number of closed major corporate Intranets as "required" Monday Morning reading.. Our ascii readers have nothing to worry themselves about. It looks like it is here to stay.

Many grateful thanks in advance for your enthusiastic co-operation and input.

Ralph F. Mariano, Editor  
 rmariano@streport.com  
 STReport International Online Magazine

#### Holiday Cookie Recipe Contest!!!

Win your very own copy of Recipe Box for Windows 95:

All you have to do is send in your favorite Holiday Cookie Recipe to:  
 recipes@recipe-box.com

As an example: My favorite and very best Holiday Cookie Recipe.

Ralph's Chocolate Chip Diet Spoilers  
 They're Delicious!

2 cups Grade A, unsalted butter  
 1 tsp. salt  
 2 cups sugar  
 3 tsp. baking powder  
 2 cups brown sugar

3 tsp. baking soda  
4 large grade A eggs  
24 oz. chocolate chips or M&M candies  
3 tsp. Flavor extract (Vanilla, Rum, Butterscotch, etc.)  
1 chocolate bar (8 oz.), sweet or bittersweet, grated  
4 cups sifted flour  
3 cups chopped nuts (optional)  
5 cups smooth blended oatmeal\*  
assorted Holiday Colors in sprinkle toppings (optional)\*\*

Melt butter slowly under very low heat and fold in both sugars, stir to a creamy smooth texture. Thoroughly but gently stir eggs and flavor extract together using a whisk. In a large bowl, mix prepared ingredients together with flour, blended oatmeal, salt, baking powder and soda. Fold in chocolate chips and grated chocolate bar. Add chopped nuts (if desired). Roll mixed cookie dough into 3/4 inch balls and place about two inches apart on buttered cookie sheets.

A few tips; for a light colored cookie; chill the chocolate chips and add them and the grated chocolate to the batter last. For a chewy cookie; add one more bar of butter. Bar=4oz. For larger, fancy cookies use an ice cream scoop or a cup shaped tablespoon portion measuring spoon. For effect, granulated sugar may be sprinkled on top of the cookies before baking instead of the colored sprinkles. If chocolate sprinkles are used, add immediately after removing cookies from oven.

Also, instead of chocolate chips etc.. and grated chocolate, candied fruits may be used. However, they must be diced and used sparingly. Omitting all added goodies (chips, candied fruits, chocoates, sprinkles etc.) and using only the genuine flavor extract (no imitations) of your choice and topping with granulated sugar will yeild fantastic holiday sugar cookies.

Bake for 10 minutes at 375 degrees. Makes approximately 100 cookies (recipe may be doubled or halved as desired).

\* Measure oatmeal (not instant) and blend in a blender until a fine, silky powder.

\*\* Sprinkle colored candy toppings on cookies about 15 seconds before done.

Classics & Gaming Section  
Editor Dana P. Jacobson  
dpj@streport.com

>From the Atari Editor's Desk

"Saying it like it is!"

It's hard to believe that this year is almost over! Christmas only a few days away, and then 1998...

So, what's new these days? Well, other than the news below, we have one nice item to report to you this week that you likely are not aware:

Suzy B's Software has a couple of new CD compilations ready to go shortly - if not already available (I just received my review copies!). Remember the Suzy B's double-CD set that came out a couple of years ago? Well, it's available again as a compressed single CDRom. That's right, all of the files are compressed to fit onto one CD. More convenient to use rather than having to change CDs to find a file; and, compressed files for those of us looking to add files to our BBS file libraries.

The new CD is a continuation of where that Unabashed Atariophile, Michael Burkley, left off. Lots of "older" programs mixed in with tons of the latest Atari shareware/public domain/freeware software available today. I've only had a day or two to browse through this CD, but I already know there's a lot of terrific stuff in here! I can't wait to go through it thoroughly and report on what I find!

Another CD is a compilation of MANY of the files that were archived in the Atari Forums on CompuServe (8-bit through Falcon). In an herculean effort to prevent those files from being lost forever before the Atari forums were shut down a few months ago, we managed to obtain an account for Michael so he, along with a few others, could download as much as possible. CompuServe's Atari forums have been around for a long time and there were a lot of files there that didn't exist anywhere else online. Some of these files date back to the early Antic magazine days! I'm not sure whether or not this CD will be available commercially. But if it is, you can't pass it up!

The last CD that I received is a collection of "Christmas for the Eyes, Ears, and Soul" that Michael put together. I haven't been able to try this one yet, but going through the "table of contents" I saw a number of Christmas songs on there that are compositions by Atari musicians. The best-known that I recognized immediately were a few songs done by John Eidsvoog (CodeHead Software)! There is a lot of music and graphics on this CD collection. The CD is probably best utilized on a PC, but Atari users can still get a good use from it listening to the various music and looking at the graphics separately. Great gift idea for those who enjoy holiday music collections!

So, let's get to the rest of this week's issue. Since next week's issue will appear after Christmas, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you, our readers, a very happy holiday (whichever you happen to celebrate). Please take it easy at the office parties and other holiday celebrations - if you're going to drink, be sure someone who isn't is behind the wheel of the car!

Until next time...

DA's Layout v6.1 Atari Now Available in English!

#### MAXIMUM LAYOUT

minimal outlay!

We are pleased to announce that DA's Layout v6.1 for Atari is here! This version is the anxiously awaited full commercial English language release and is ready for shipping NOW!

---

An integrated solution that incorporates powerful Page Layout tools, Type Setting tools, Bezier Vector Editing tools, Image Processing tools, Transformation tools and so much more, DA's Layout is all you need to

create stunning advertisements, packaging artwork, business stationary etc. in black and white or full color. Having your creations printed is a snap with our full support for the worldwide industry standard, genuine Adobe PostScript(R) Level 2 page description language.

DA's Layout supports PostScript Type 1, Calamus(R) CFN as well as Didot DFN font formats - you can even print documents that contain all of these font formats to any PostScript device!

Sharing artwork with other packages is a breeze as well! DA's Layout loads and saves any object, or a complete document in the Calamus CVG vector format, IMG vector format, DIG vector format and EPS as well as the worldwide industry standard bitmapped image format - TIFF. You can even view color separations directly within DA's Layout! Have you ever gone to press and received results that were unsatisfactory? We have! Our Separation Preview feature eliminates these costly errors.

DA's Layout is filled with industry leading features such as: Multiple Page Sizes in a document, Document Wide Layers, 2 methods of Vertical Justification (leading grid as well as vertical justification with user definable offset), the ability to output film with objects on the same page that are assigned independant Chromatic and Achromatic Separation methods, Independant or Global Gradation settings, Object Level Trapping, Up to 12 Color Separation Plates, Set Text on any Vector Path and so much more! You can even calories bitmapped images!

DA's Layout Pro is expandible with Plug-In modules that enhance your creativity to the max! We have modules for Font Editing, Barcode Generation, Vector Auto Tracing, Adobe Illustrator level 3 file support, PostScript Clipping Paths, Archival Visual Database, 3D Extrusions with user definable light source, Monitor Calibration for printed ink simulation on-screen and Composition Merge Filters with user definable saturation, luminance and transparency settings. In addition we offer PhotoScreen, our FM Stochastic screening method up to 3600 dpi and the multi-award winning Reference.K auto-K separation tables that ensure quality one step 4 color separations - every time!

We have pre-bundled these modules in three superb packages that provide excellent value for the dollar!

DA's Layout can save your documents in many different ways. You can save and load any page, layer, object or a complete document. We even have a unique portable document format that embeds fonts and images for reliable cross platform with 100% compatibility! No need to send your fonts and images with your documents and leave lady luck in charge - simply save the file in our embedded format! This feature allows you to save a Layout document created on an Atari and open it on a Macintosh.

Download DA's Layout v6.1 now! Place your order for DA's Layout and get instant access to download your copy now from our web server! Naturally, we will still send your master disks and users manual in the mail. This new technology allows you to start using DA's Layout today. See our web site for more information on the features found in DA's Layout Atari!

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A demo is available for download!

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(includes 3 modules! Font Editor, Vector Tracer, Barcode)

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Ultimate Virus Killer 2000 - SPECIAL OFFER!

Good day to all, Atari friends!

I am releasing a definitive version of my "Ultimate Virus Killer", now called "Ultimate Virus Killer 2000", version 8.0. Now is your chance to get your hands on the definitive piece of virus killing software for the Atari ST/TT/Falcon range of computers. Here's what it can do...

1) It can kill more viruses than any other virus killer...right now over

100!

- 2) It is the only virus killer that can recognize "UVD Virus", "Carpe Diem Virus" and "Pharaohs Curse Virus"
- 3) For the past two years or so it's been the only virus killer that's still updated, and it will continue to be updated at least twice per year
- 4) It works on any ST/TT/Falcon system with 1 Mb of memory (or more)
- 5) It supports any multi-tasking OS that exists
- 6) It also runs on GEMulator and PacifiST on the PC

This piece of software can now be yours for the amazing price of US\$10 (or 5 British pounds, or 15 German marks, or 15 Dutch guilders) - and that includes postage! And the special offer is that, if you send off your order before 1 January 1998, you will get the next update (to be released around summer 1998) COMPLETELY FOR FREE (sorry for my shouting :-).

So don't think twice and get the definitive virus killing tool for the Atari range of computers, the "Ultimate Virus Killer 2000" version 8.0, right this minute.

If you need more info, email to me at [karies@wx.nl](mailto:karies@wx.nl).

The address to order at is Richard Karsmakers, P.O. Box 67, NL-3500 AB, Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Of course, while I'm at it, I would like to use this message to wish all of you the best Christmas you've ever had, with a cool 1998 to follow!

\* AniPlayer \*

Didier Mequignon has just released v1.21 of AniPlayer, his freeware GEM MOV/AVI-player.

The next version will support NOVA 16-bit (Hades) and maybe zoom 2x in window. You will find AniPlayer at:

<http://www5.tripnet.se/~mille/tello/tello.html>

\* MyMail \*

This email client by Erik Hdll is updated (again) to v0.46. He added a window to display unpacking of file attachments and it's possible to abort this if necessary.

\* Swedish HomePage Penguin Pro HTML-manual under construction \*

This will appear at my homepage and as a packed zip-file. It's already at: <http://www5.tripnet.se/~mille/penguin/> but I'm working with it every day now. The manual contains instructions and snapshots of the dialogs.

There's no Swedish RSC-file to download; it's in the original package.

\* Spanish CAB version \*

David Gonzalez Flores (Mexico) just corrected some errors to the previous release. You can now download the Spanish version of CAB from my download page with docs bundled, along with Spanish version of GEMjing and the plug-ins that CAB uses at the moment.

\* Application Systems Heidelberg \*

I just received permission to translate the ASH commercial apps Fiffi (FTP-client) and ASH Emailer to use with PPP-Connect. The Swedish versions of these (RSC-files) with HTML-manuals will be available from my homepage before this year turns into 1998. These files won't be bundled with the original packages from ASH; they will be downloadable from my homepage only.

Best Regards

Mille Babic  
mille@tripnet.se  
<http://www5.tripnet.se/~mille>  
channel Atari: <http://hem1.passagen.se/atari/>

#### Gaming Section

FOX Sports Interactive!  
Super Street Fighter II Collection  
Resident Evil" Scores!  
And more!

>From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!

It's Christmas time; and this is the gaming section of the magazine. What more can I say but have a great gaming holiday - I hope you find all of your anticipated gaming gifts under the tree next week - there's plenty to choose from this year! In this week's issue, we'll have some reports of some of the latest offerings for that last-minute gift idea.

Until next time...

Industry News STR Game Console NewsFile - The Latest Gaming News!

#### Fox Sports and Fox Interactive Team Up To Launch FOX Sports Interactive

LOS ANGELES (Dec. 15) BUSINESS WIRE - Dec. 15, 1997 - Leveraging one of America's strongest and growing brands, two separate Fox divisions, FOX Sports, recognized as the premier and most innovative sports broadcaster in the United States, and FOX Interactive, a leader in worldwide game publishing, Monday announced that they are joining forces to create what is destined to be one of the most popular game franchises ever -- FOX Sports Interactive. The new venture calls for Fox Interactive, in concert with Fox Sports, to create and market a comprehensive, multi-platform line of compelling interactive sports games for the North American market. The announcement was made Monday by Jon Richmond, president of FOX Interactive, and Tracy Dolgin, executive vice president, FOX Sports and chief operating officer, FOX Sports Net. Of the announcement, Dolgin noted, "This is a perfect way to extend the dominance of the FOX Sports brand. Since its creation, FOX Sports has become synonymous with fun, innovation and excitement, and now we can bring these powerful assets to bear on the

lucrative video game market."

"Having established Fox Interactive as a significant competitor in the video game arena, leveraging Fox studio properties as well as developing our own characters and game franchises, we're eager to partner with Fox Sports to enter the sports video game market," said Richmond. "FOX Sports has revitalized sports broadcasting in the U.S. FOX Interactive has proven itself time and again to deliver compelling games that have propelled it to the forefront of the highly competitive video gaming industry. The combination of that powerful branding with outstanding gameplay will produce the next generation of sports video games."

FOX Sports Interactive will launch a line of products in 1998 including FOX Sports Hockey, FOX Sports Golf, FOX Sports Tennis and FOX Sports Soccer. The games will be available for multiple formats including SONY PlayStation and PC CD-ROM. The games will be supported by a number of major partners and endorsements, the first of which is the National Hockey League and the National Hockey League Players Association for the NHL on FOX interactive game to be released at the start of the 1998-99 Hockey season.

To support the launch of FOX Sports Interactive, Fox Interactive also announced a long-term development agreement with Gremlin, a top British games developer known for its critically acclaimed Actua Sports series of games. Richmond added, "We intend to bring to gaming the same attitude that Fox brought to sports broadcasting and combine it with the outstanding gameplay that is synonymous with our key developer, Gremlin, one of the hottest sports games developers in the world." In the November issue of Electronic Gaming Monthly, a leading enthusiast publication, developer Gremlin was named as one of the "hottest" developers in the United Kingdom: "Gremlin is a company that deserves further observation. Gremlin could easily...propel a U.S. company into instant top 10 status."

In its short two-year history, FOX Interactive has achieved unparalleled success with the launch of its first titles inspired by great FOX properties, ALIEN TRILOGY, DIE HARD TRILOGY and INDEPENDENCE DAY. Its first original property, CROC, is considered to be a best-selling title for the crowded fourth quarter 1997 having already shipped nearly 700,000 units on PlayStation in its first two months of release. "The launch of FOX Sports Interactive is a major step in the continued expansion of FOX Interactive. Spurred by our success over the last two years, the sports video game category, which represents a major portion of the total \$5.5 billion video and computer game industry, is an obvious extension for FOX Interactive. Our sister company, FOX Sports, is not only the recognized leader in sports programming but also a marketing powerhouse that will enable us to effectively compete in this highly-charged market," concluded Richmond.

#### Capcom Ships Super Street Fighter II Collection

SUNNYVALE, CALIF. (Dec. 16) BUSINESS WIRE - Dec. 16, 1997 - Capcom Entertainment today announced that they have shipped Super Street Fighter II Collection(TM), a new 3-in-1 compilation of its mega-selling, Super Street Fighter II series for the Sony PlayStation and Sega Saturn. The Super Street Fighter II Collection contains three classic games from Capcom's flagship fighting series: "Super Street Fighter II," "Super Street Fighter II Turbo" and "Street Fighter Alpha 2 Gold," an enhanced version of "Street Fighter Alpha 2" seen here for the first time in the United States. Selling at a lower price point and packaged as a two-CD set, Super Street Fighter II Collection offers these nostalgic fighting classics for the first time ever on the next-generation gaming systems. Super Street Fighter



II Collection is currently available at a suggested retail price of \$44.99. "For the first time ever, Capcom has released these three arcade fighting classics in one package. This is a tremendous value for our consumers," says Robert Lindsey, vice president of sales and marketing for Capcom Entertainment. "The Super Street Fighter II Collection definitely has a 'nostalgic' appeal, for now the majority of gamers who once flocked to the arcades can have exact translations on their next-generation home gaming systems."

Super Street Fighter II Collection chronicles the best and the most innovative advancements in the best-selling fighting game series of all time. "Super Street Fighter II," originally released in 1993 for the Arcade, SNES and Sega Genesis, set a precedent by introducing four new characters to the Street Fighter series: Dee Jay, Feilong, T. Hawk and of course, Cammy. "Super Street Fighter II Turbo," originally released in 1994 for the arcade and the 3DO, introduced the Super Combo system of fighting moves, which set the high standard in all future fighting games. It was also the first time that the popular, yet mysterious character Akuma was introduced to the series. "Street Fighter Alpha 2 Gold" is an upgrade to "Street Fighter Alpha 2" and features alternate versions of select characters, new animation, with new moves and modes of play.

#### Resident Evil Franchise Tops \$200 Million Worldwide

SUNNYVALE, CALIF. (Dec. 17) BUSINESS WIRE - Dec. 17, 1997 - Capcom Entertainment, Inc. today announced that Resident Evil and its licensed properties have generated revenue of more than \$200 million worldwide. The overwhelming success of the company's best-selling survival horror video game has established another huge franchise for Capcom. To date, more than 4 million units of Resident Evil (known as Biohazard in Japan) and Resident Evil: Director's Cut have been sold worldwide. Nearly one million units sold through in the U.S. market alone.

The skyrocketing success of the product has also made it a popular licensing property. Capcom has inked deals for the creation of a Resident Evil feature film, a line of action figures, and a series of comic books. This already successful franchise will intensify in January when Capcom releases Resident Evil 2, hailed the most anticipated video game of 1998. "We are very proud of what Resident Evil has achieved within the industry," said Robert Lindsey, senior vice president of sales and marketing for Capcom Entertainment. "The success of Resident Evil is a tremendous compliment to Capcom R&D in Japan. Not only did they create a product with worldwide consumer appeal, but they demonstrated their diversity as developers. We are focused on making Resident Evil the hottest property available and all of the hard work and effort is paying off.

"With revenue exceeding \$200 million, Resident Evil is already larger than most theatrical motion picture releases. Now all eyes are clearly focused on Resident Evil 2, destined to become an instant classic and one of the hottest games of '98. Like our best-selling Mega Man and Street Fighter franchises, Resident Evil is another winner for Capcom." Since its release in March 1996, Resident Evil has established a whole new genre in the gaming industry, even spawning a series of "Resident Evil-like" clones. Resident Evil has won industry awards including Sony's, "Consumer's Choice Best PlayStation Game Overall" and the honor as one of Sony's highest selling third party franchises of all time on the PlayStation.

Capcom released Resident Evil Director's Cut that included an interactive demo of Resident Evil 2. A two-disc set, Director's Cut sold through more than 300,000 units since its release on Sept. 30, 1997 for the Sony

PlayStation. Director's Cut contains three versions of the classic horror game, including a newer, more difficult mode, which allowed players to re-experience the intensity and suspense of Resident Evil. Resident Evil is available for both the Sony PlayStation and Sega Saturn. Constantin Films of Germany acquired the rights to Resident Evil for development into a feature film earlier this year. Screenwriter Alan McElroy, most recently known for his work on the movie Spawn, has nearly finished writing the screenplay that closely follows the storyline of the game.

Toy Biz, a leading toy manufacturer with several successful action figure lines based on the Marvel Universe, in conjunction with Capcom, will create a line of action figures based on Resident Evil. Toy Biz will launch the first line of figures from the original Resident Evil, which will include Chris, Jill, Tyrant and other popular characters, in the second quarter of 1998. Toy Biz plans to release an assortment of Resident Evil 2 action figures in the fourth quarter of 1998.

Jim Lee's Wildstorm Productions, distributed by Image Comics, and creators of the popular Wildcats and GEN 13 comic books, has also teamed up with Capcom and Resident Evil. Wildstorm will develop a quarterly series of comic books based on the Resident Evil line of products. Available in March 1998, the premier issue will tell the tale of the evil Umbrella organization and the truth behind the terror taking place in Raccoon City.

#### ASC Games Obtains North American Publishing Rights to Grand Theft Auto

DARIEN, CONN. (Dec. 18) BUSINESS WIRE - Dec. 18, 1997 - Highly Acclaimed, and Sometimes Controversial, Video Game Coming to PC and PlayStation. The nastiest crime family of them all is coming to North America as ASC Games, a publisher and developer of video games for PlayStation, Sega Saturn and PC CD-ROM, has obtained the North American publishing rights to one of Europe's hottest video games of the year, Grand Theft Auto. Developed by DMA Design and published in Europe by BMG Interactive, GTA is scheduled to release in the U.S. on February 1, 1998 for the PC and in April 1998 for PlayStation.

"There have been many controversial opinions surrounding Grand Theft Auto throughout the pre-launch period in Europe. However, we believe that it features some of the best game play elements across any genre and is one of the most original games to hit any platform in years," said Sharon Wood, executive vice president of marketing at ASC Games. "A simple Internet and Newsgroup search query for 'Grand+Theft+Auto' further supported what we had already suspected - pages and pages of individual web sites, news postings and online competitions dedicated solely to GTA. The results were staggering, especially for a game that, at the time, was still only available as a downloadable demo here in the U.S."

Here's the scenario: Car-theft, dangerous driving, high-speed police chases - Grand Theft Auto has everything one could want in a fast-paced, arcade-style action game. As a carjacker working on behalf of the Mafia, more than 200 missions will keep the action moving through 6,000 miles of roads, freeways and allayer can steal any one of 30 different cars and take the nearest shortcut on the sidewalk or through a local park - even if it is fully loaded with innocent bystanders. The campaign will include television, online and print advertising; in-store point of sale promotions; downloadable demos; as well as on ASC Games' web site at [www.ascgames.com](http://www.ascgames.com).

Politically Correct Version of 'The Night Before Christmas!'

'Twas the night before Christmas and Santa's a wreck...  
How to live in a world that's politically correct?  
His workers no longer would answer to "Elves"  
"Vertically Challenged" they were calling themselves  
And labor conditions at the north pole  
Were alleged by the union to stifle the soul  
Four reindeer had vanished, without much propriety  
Released to the wilds by the Humane Society  
And equal employment had made it quite clear  
That Santa had better not use just reindeer  
So Dancer and Donner, Comet and Cupid  
Were replaced with 4 pigs, and you know that looked stupid!

The runners had been removed from his sleigh;  
The ruts were termed dangerous by the E P A  
And people had started to call for the cops  
When they heard sled noises on their roof-tops  
Second-hand smoke from his pipe had his workers quite frightened  
His fur trimmed red suit was called "Unenlightened"

And to show you the strangeness of life's ebbs and flows  
Rudolf was suing over unauthorized use of his nose  
And had gone on Geraldo, in front of the nation  
Demanding millions in over-due compensation

So, half of the reindeer were gone; and his wife  
Who suddenly said she'd enough of this life  
Joined a self-help group, packed, and left in a whiz  
Demanding from now on her title was Ms

And as for the gifts, why, he'd ne'er had a notion  
That making a choice could cause so much commotion  
Nothing of leather, nothing of fur  
Which meant nothing for him. And nothing for her  
Nothing that might be construed to pollute  
Nothing to aim. Nothing to shoot  
Nothing that clamored or made lots of noise  
Nothing for just girls. Or just for boys  
Nothing that claimed to be gender specific  
Nothing that's warlike or non-pacific

No candy or sweets ... they were bad for the tooth  
Nothing that seemed to embellish the truth  
And fairy tales, while not yet forbidden  
Were like Ken and Barbie, better off hidden  
For they raised the hackles of those psychological  
Who claimed the only good gift was ecological

No baseball, no football ... someone could get hurt;  
Besides; playing sports exposed kids to dirt  
Dolls were said to be sexist, and should be passe;  
And Nintendo would rot your entire brain away

So Santa just stood there, disheveled, perplexed;  
He just could not figure out what to do next  
He tried to be merry, tried to be gay  
But you've got to be careful with that word today

His sack was quite empty, limp to the ground;  
Nothing fully acceptable was to be found  
Something special was needed, a gift that he might  
Give to all without angering the left or the right  
A gift that would satisfy, with no indecision  
Each group of people, every religion;  
Every ethnicity, every hue  
Everyone, everywhere ... even you  
So here is that gift, it's price beyond worth ...

"May you and your loved ones enjoy peace on earth"

ONLINE WEEKLY STReport OnLine

The wires are a hummin'!

#### PEOPLE... ARE TALKING

Compiled by Joe Mirando  
jmirando@streport.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Well, the holidays are truly upon us. There's snow on the ground (in my area, anyway) and the major hobby seems to be shopping for that perpetual last gift. I even feel that almost magnetic tug as I pass a store or, dare I say it, a MALL.

For those of you interested in using CAB, the Crystal Atari Browser, to access the internet but don't like the idea of having to use a particular operating system just to surf the web, I've got good news for you. I've finally gotten STinG to work for me... So it really DOES work. I can now use an ISP that requires a PPP connection. Once I learned which parts of the documentation were necessary to set the program up for the internet (STinG also can be used to set up a Local Area Network, or LAN) I had surprisingly few problems. I even got STinG to work with CompuServe. The problem with CompuServe is that, when logging in, it expects you to use 7 bit text. StinG was configured for the VAST majority of internet service providers who deal strictly in 8 bit text. I've put all the necessary text and files in the libraries of The Computer Club Forum on CompuServe if you're interested.

I'm also become more and more impressed with CAB 2.5 the more I use it. Sure, it doesn't have the glitz of Netscape Navigator, and it doesn't take over your entire system like the new Explorer does, but it allows me to do things I want to do. And THAT is where I want to go today. <grin>

Well, let's take a look at what's going 'round in the Atari UseNet NewsGroups. There's some interesting stuff to be found there.

>From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup

Several of us get together and have a little conversation about CAB

## 2.5. Terry May posts:

"I just received CAB 2.5 from Systems For Tomorrow and have been playing with it for a couple hours.

Wow!

What a nice upgrade. The first thing you notice is the speed. It's much, much faster than even 2.0, especially in loading graphics. And even while it's loading pages, it seems much more responsive. It seems like you have installed an accelerator. Everything just seems quicker and more responsive.

One nice new feature I really like is the ability to right-click on any graphic, which brings up the file selector, allowing you to save it anywhere with its original name already in the file selector. No more 000000d3.jpg files and no more searching through the cache for graphics (though it has nice utilities for doing that, too)!

Another nice feature is that it shows the bytes/sec rate in the status line. Very nice for the larger files, allowing you to see just how fast you're getting data.

It comes with lots of other nice little goodies, too, but I'm just getting started. Suffice it to say, I'm extremely happy with my \$49.95 investment. I can't wait for v2.6 to hit the English streets.

Oh, by the way, I still haven't tried PPP-Connect. Peter's STinG is working so well, that's way down on my list of priorities. I'll definitely give it a shot this weekend, though. But given the lack of support for it, I won't stick with it. I just want to see how well it works. From looking at the docs, the interface looks very nice and user friendly. (Of course, BubbleGEM is there to help, if needed.)

I tell Terry:

"My absolute favorite feature in CAB 2.5 is the 'Ad-Buster' module that keeps you from wasting time downloading the web page ads that we always wished we could get away from."

Terry May tells me:

"Strangely, I haven't tried that yet, but will do so today.

Perhaps my favorite feature is the download module. That is so cool, being able to download files in the background, with their original filenames. I was downloading about 10 demos yesterday, all at the same time, while still surfing in the foreground. And later I was downloading a bunch of other files at the same time, while surfing in the foreground. That is such a cool feature. No more staring at the screen, waiting for a download to finish.

I also love the ability to save any graphic, such as a cool icon, just by right clicking on it. And again, you get the original filename instead of something like 0000006d.jpg.

Oh, and lest I forget, ESPN's SportsZone now looks just fine! No more text/picture alignment problems. I frequent another site ([www.unlvrebels.com](http://www.unlvrebels.com)) that still has that problem, though."

Jo Even Skarstein adds:

"Sounds nice, I wish I could afford it... But the upgrade alone costs more than CAB 2 did in the first place. <frown>"

Magnus Kollberg tells Jo:

"Yes this is a problem. ASH really get what they can and a bit more..."

Someone showed me how much it would cost you if you bought version 2.0 and upgraded every time you there were a new update....

EXPENSIVE!!

Minor updates should be for free and major updates shouldn't cost an arm and a leg as they do now."

When I mention:

"I'm still waiting for support for cookies and a JAVA interpreter, but I'm not holding my breath. <grin>"

Terry May tells me:

"Dan Ackerman has implemented cookie support in a beta version of his CAB.OVL for STiK / STinG, and I'm confident he'll soon release it... What are the advantages of cookie support?"

Howard Chu, the author of the CAB-For-MiNTNet overlay, tells Terry:

"Depends on how a web server uses 'em. The idea is that the server can send you specific bits of info that it wants remembered, so that it can maintain a "session" for you. First you should note that HTTP is intended to be a stateless protocol, i.e., the server doesn't remember anything about any of the clients connecting to it; every request is ordinarily treated as fully independent, coming out of the blue. For some purposes though, it's necessary for the server to maintain the notion of a session, to remember who you are and what things you've accessed. Cookies provide a way for the server to keep track of session info. The server gives you a cookie, and then on subsequent requests to that same server, you send back the cookie. This way the server knows who you are and what you've done on the web site so far, etc."

Generally this allows servers that require logins to keep track of the fact that you've logged in, etc. For servers that let you buy things, cookies are a simple way of maintaining a "shopping cart" - every item that you select for purchase goes into a cookie list. When it's time to check out and actually buy the stuff, the client hands all the cookies back to the server, so it can tell what you're buying...

The shopping example is pretty unrealistic, I know. It comes straight out of the protocol spec, so I gave it. For the most part, sites that use cookies also need an alternate way for tracking, since not all browsers support 'em."

Martin-Eric Racine adds:

"...However, there is sometimes "cookie abuse" on the Net. For instance, try ANY page (including user pages) on <http://www.pandore.qc.ca> and you'll find yourself bombarded with cookies that serve no purpose.

On the other hand, cookies CAN be usefull. WebCrawler uses them to remember your search preferences (hits per page, search logics,

etc.) so that you can always have the search results formatted to your taste."

Mille Babic asks:

"TOS v6 is under development, anyone know by whom? Who bought the rights before Atari was incorporated with JTS? Is this another joke or what?"

John Kolak asks:

"What happened to TOS 5? JTS took over Atari's intellectual property, and John Skrunch at JTS handles licensing. Wizztronics has been trying to buy TOS for nearly two years now. My last post concerning them actually buying it in February was contested, and there has been no additional confirmation."

Nicholas Bales tells Mille and John:

"The french ST Magazine stated that TOS 6 was being developed for the Milan, based on the old TOS 5 betas (4.92 I think). Apparently the Milan people have obtained the license."

Well folks, that's about it for this week. I hope to be able to log some time with CAB 2.5 so that I can do a decent review of it soon. Up until now, most of my time has been spent evaluating both I-Connect and StinG, and deciding which I wanted to use. Now that I've made that decision, all I require is time.

I will of course be back again next week, same time, same station, so be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

EDITORIAL QUICKIES

Happy Holidays to All!  
STReport International Magazine

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